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## Looking for new blood

Lioness Club works to improve the lives of people in Port Colborne  
Page 2

## The sporting life

Mild and muddy weekend for Port Colborne's annual celebration  
Page 3

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# INPORT NEWS

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## Waiting for Spring



Ships wait silently for the ice to break up while docked on the Welland Canal in Port Colborne Friday.

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# UPFRONT



MICHELLE ALLENBERG/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Port Colborne Lioness Bonnie Driscolo discusses upcoming club plans with director Claudia Brema and president Katherine Klauk.

## Aging Lioness Club looking for fresh faces

**MICHELLE ALLENBERG**  
Postmedia Network

Port Colborne Lioness Club, without a new member for three years, is looking to grow.

President Katherine Klauk says many of its 40 members are aging and although they would like to assist with club events are unable to. Others have young families and are

busy caring for children.

"It's hard because people lead very busy lives, so it's hard to actually have individuals who can make the commitment," Klauk says.

Club director Claudia Brema says aging members face unique challenges. They may have issues driving at night due to eyesight, or other health problems that prevent them from participating in

events.

For more than 30 years the club has worked to improve the lives of people in need in Port Colborne. It's still one of the largest Lioness clubs in the area.

But having active members has been a constant challenge for the club over the years.

The club gets all of its money through about eight annual fundraisers.

"We have great support from the community," Klauk says. "Santa's Breakfast, that's something that is pretty unique that we offer and the community supports it."

The club is always looking for new ideas and hopes to welcome new members who can bring diverse suggestions. One new idea that has been a success is the candy gram delivery during Valentine's

Day week.

Klauk says it's important for members to be open-minded and passionate about giving back.

Anyone is interested in joining the club can contact Klauk via e-mail at [katherine\\_klauk@hotmail.com](mailto:katherine_klauk@hotmail.com). To become a member the person needs to be sponsored by a Lioness member. After attending two meetings

the club will decide whether the individual can become a member.

Meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Lioness Club, 49 Chippawa Rd, Port Colborne.

To be a member there is a \$50 annual fee. The money is used to support local programs and organizations.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Sportsfest activities include one in shooters' sights

**FRANKI IKEMAN**  
Postmedia Network

It was a mild and muddy weekend for Port Colborne's annual Sportsfest.

The three-day festival of sports had many events and activities to keep people busy throughout the weekend, including the Mayor's Cup hockey tournament, family skating, sno-pitch and a winter mountain bike race.

And something else to take aim at. Tucked away on

Second Concession, the Port Colborne and District Conservation Club hosted trap and skeet shooting as part of the festivities.

"We've got trap and skeet shooting at the club, so what we do is offer that as a part of the Sportsfest. It gives people a chance to try it if they haven't done it before," said range master Dave Stanley.

The games aren't just for avid hunters, Stanley said, many people just like shoot-

ing at clay targets.

"It's a game kind of like golf in some ways," Stanley said.

"Trap shooting is a game that's kind of like hunting: you shoot 25 rounds at clay birds, and the same with skeet shooting."

Stanley said anyone is welcome at their trap and skeet days, from beginners, to advanced.

The schedule can be found at [www.ncdccc.com](http://www.ncdccc.com).



Participants are lined up for trap shooting at Port Colborne and District Conservation Club on Sunday.



PHOTOS BY FRANKI INEMAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Kathleen Stanley, 14, practises trap shooting at Port Colborne and District Conservation Club on Sunday.



Participants are lined up for trap shooting at Port Colborne and District Conservation Club on Sunday.



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# Run away from visions and dreams

PASTOR MICHAEL MELOD

Faith & St. Peter's Lutheran Churches, Dunnville & Port Colborne

Fads come and go, and then come back again. They can be as harmless as belly-bottom jeans and as dangerous as praying to angels. The fascination with the spiritual, the occult, unexplainable powers, aliens, angels, witchcraft, ghosts, and with all the ways of making contact with spiritual or otherworldly beings has plagued every nation, sometimes among only a few and sometimes among most of the population. So what is a Christian to make of all of this? We are also tempted by visions and dreams we hear about or experience ourselves. The attraction of the occult — of spiritual knowledge and spiritual power which are not given to us by God — is alluring. This is another topic that is clearly explained in the bible, but most people either don't know it or are confused by it.

Three points and many bible verses give us a solid understanding of this great danger. Before getting into those, before anything else, you must know that there are only two spiritual powers: God with His holy angels, and Satan with his evil angels (also called demons). Therefore, if you are contacting or receiving any spiritual information or power that is not promised and given to you by God,

then it is definitely, beyond the shadow of a doubt, from Satan and his demons. There is no neutral or harmless spirituality. Seek after the spiritual knowledge and power God promises and gives, and run away from everything else!

1. God commands us to stay away from spirits and the dead. He says we must not listen to them, seek them out, or be in contact with them in any way (Leviticus 19:31; 20:6-8, 26-27). We must not look to these evil things because the Father has raised up Jesus to speak to us His Word (Deuteronomy 18:9-19). Spiritism and consulting the dead are great evils like worshipping false gods (2 Kings 21:2-6). Instead of following after them, God's people look to His Word for guidance (1 Chronicles 10:13-14). "And when they say to you, 'Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,' should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? To the Law and to the Testimony (to God's Word)! If they do not seek according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8:19-20)."

2. Satan has used in the past, and continues to use, false visions and dreams to deceive both unbelievers and Christians (Jeremiah 29:8, 18). Jesus said, "Now everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in

heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness (Matthew 23:23)!' And another time He warned, "False Christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect (Christians). But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand (Mark 13:22-23)." Several times Jesus warns of false teachers, false preachers, deceivers who even do "miracles" to trick us into believing their lies and half-truths, and when Jesus warns us He usually adds a phrase like, "See, I have told you all things beforehand," to emphasize that we should not be fooled; it's like saying, "These things will be tempting, but wake up, so don't take the coffee!" I warned you about them, so don't fall for it!"

And these are not the only warnings to run away from visions and dreams, workers of 'miracles', contacting the dead (seances), and every other spiritual evil, but God tells us that these things will continue to happen. "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1). It also says Jeremiah 14:14-16; 23:16-32; Ezekiel 13:17-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Galatians 1:3-10; and 2 Corinthians

11:3-4, 13-15.

3. Satan's power is real and he actively fights against Christians, but we have the victory in Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour. See Ephesians 6:10-24; Acts 26:15-18; Romans 1:16; 16:25-27; John 8:31-32, 47. God tells us that deceptions will continue, but Christians stand firm on God's Word. "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy

Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (see 1 Timothy 3:12-16). This should not make us afraid, but comfort us knowing that God is stronger, His Word is more powerful, and the faith that He gives us more sure than any deception of the devil or any of his servants. Be wise, be aware, run away from the deceptions, for He has told you beforehand, and know that God is with you, protecting you, strengthening you and keeping you in the Faith through His Holy Word and Sacraments. "God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world (Galatians 6:14)."

## Why you need a community paper

The question was a simple one, but not easy to answer.

Did I think community newspapers will continue to exist in the future?

It seems like a yes or no question. Yet when I was asked during a talk I gave to the St. Catharines Ad and Sales Association last week, I didn't have that precise an answer.

Unless you are living in a cave where the only information you get is via Snapchat, you've heard about the state of newspapers in Canada: Layoffs and restructuring. Declining circulation and a struggle to find audiences and revenue in an increasingly digital world. One of the country's oldest papers, the *Windsor Mercury*, closed this month.

A bold yes or no to the question would have been rather flippant. The truth is, I don't know what the Fates have in store for my craft. I will not pretend to have answers I don't.

I did say there will forever be a need for the fourth estate. And so there will always be a

need for newspapers, even if the future is a virtual one instead of paper and ink.

Consider just a slice of the past few months of coverage in Postmedia's Niagara papers — the *St. Catharines Standard*, Niagara Falls *Review* and Welland *Tribune*.

We've exposed deep rifts within regional council, reported on important criminal trials, covered local sports, shown you the drama on the police services board, created debate on Niagara College's ventures in Saudi Arabia and kept you up to date on municipal budgets and transit plans.

We've told your stories, as members of the community, be they tragic or happy.

I am not attempting to injure my wrist by patting our backs too much, but it is a fact that if we're not sitting in those council meetings and asking the questions, you would have little knowledge of what the public institutions that are answerable to you as citizens are doing.

In as much as news outlets that employ journalists are for-profit businesses, at

its most fundamental level, journalism is necessary for the proper functioning of a democracy. It exists to inform citizens who elect governments, which in turn make policy that will impact citizens from education to small business and health care.

Despite what many people say, no one actually gets their news from social media. Facebook and Twitter are useful tools to share stories, but every news item you see or share in your feed was created by journalists.

Blogging gives anyone with an Internet connection a voice, which is marvellous and important. However, with only a few exceptions, blogging isn't journalism. Bloggers aren't doing interviews or pouring over government and scientific reports. Lacking the financial and legal resources of a news outlet, they aren't doing the kind of investigative work journalists do every day.

In the absence of journalism, all you have is silence wrapped around the carefully crafted messaging of public relations. Instead

of information and debate, authority operates unchallenged and all you have is Orwellian Newspeak.

Without journalists, there will be no one to tell your stories.

We often rate journalism cheaply in a world where opinions can be cast to the digital winds for free, where click bait and top 10 lists masquerade as news.

Journalism is not free, but it is vitally important. Alex de Tocqueville once wrote that the power of the press is second only to that of the people. I think it is more accurate to say the press is what gives the people the tools needed to wield its power.

Consider where St. Catharines would be if this paper had not been informing the community for the past 125 years?

So do I think community papers like this one will exist in the future? They have to, for without them, we would live in truly impoverished communities, blind to the challenges we face and the choices we have to make.

— Grant Lafliche

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# LOCAL NEWS



FRANK IREMAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORKS

Chuck Lemay inside his Lemayzzz ... Meats shop.

## Lemayzzz ... Meats opens in Port Colborne

Port Colborne's newest butcher shop has had a successful first four weeks, says Lemayzzz ... Meats owner Chuck Lemay.

The Welland man opened the shop after purchasing the former Country Corner Market, where he had previously worked for three years.

"Eventually I wanted to start working for myself, so when this opportunity came up I jumped on it as quickly as possible," he said.

Lemay has been in the meat industry for about 22 years and said growing up working in the business turned his profession into a passion.

Lemayzzz ... Meats offers fresh Canadian Grade AA and higher quality beef, free-run poultry, Ontario pork, sausages from Country Corner Market and store-made and catering. The shop's advantage, Lemay said, is that you deal directly with the butcher.

"More chuck for your buck," he quips.

"I think everybody needs a nice quality butcher shop to go to where they can have trust in their butcher," Lemay said. "They're spending a great deal of money on meat nowadays so it's nice to know who you're getting it from and what you're buying."

Originally, Lemay had thought he would name the shop Lemaying Meats, but his seven-year-old daughter liked Lemayzzz better — one z for each Lemay, including his wife and daughter.

The shop is at 82 Clarence St. in Port Colborne. For more information visit [www.lemayzzzmeats.com](http://www.lemayzzzmeats.com) or follow on Facebook.

The Tribune's Biz Buzz column runs each Wednesday. Contact reporter Franki Ikeman at [franki.ikeman@sunmedia.ca](mailto:franki.ikeman@sunmedia.ca) or at 905-684-7251 ext. 581167 with business tips.

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FRANKI IKEMAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

St. Catharines MP Chris Bittle tries his hand at conducting Chorus Niagara with the help of artistic director Robert Cooper at Chorus Niagara's 10th annual Singathon fundraiser held at Seaway Mall on Saturday.

## Chorus Niagara annual Singathon hits high note

FRANKI IKEMAN  
Postmedia network

They sang and they sang, and then they sang some more.

For about five hours Saturday, Chorus Niagara treated an audience at Seaway Mall to singing at the 10th annual Chorus Niagara Singathon fundraiser.

The fundraiser is hosted every year to raise much of the funds needed for the organization to run its programming.

"We set a goal of \$50,000 and every year we seem to hit it," said singathon co-chair Claudia Meyer.

Meyer said she had a "funny feeling" the group would hit its goal again this year.

The show featured special "celebrity conductors" in St. Catharines MP Chris Bittle, Niagara Centre MP Vance Badaway and Pelham town councillor Peter Papp, who each had the opportunity to try their hands at directing the choir's 85

singers under the watchful eye of Chorus Niagara artistic director Robert Cooper.

The show also featured a lunch-time performance by Chorus Niagara's Children's Choir.

Meyer said this year's turnout did not disappoint.

"We were very pleased with the turnout, the seats were pretty much taken the whole time," she said of a gallery for about a hundred people.

Meyer said organizing the singathon is a lot of work — but come show day, it's a lot of fun for all those involved.

"It's just nice. We really enjoy it, it's a fun day."

Seaway Mall is where the chorus went on to become an Internet sensation when it did a flash mob performance of Handel's *Messiah* in the food court that went viral. Since being posted to YouTube in November 2010 it has been viewed more than 48.1 million times.

# Parks commission job fair draws hundreds of hopefuls

**RAY SPITENI**  
Postmedia Network

About 50 people waited outside before Niagara Parks Commission opened the doors to its second annual job fair on Saturday morning.

About 450 attended last year's seasonal opportunity, and judging by the early turnout on Saturday, NPC expected to top that number this year.

General manager John Lohuis said young people are attracted to the NPC because of the "diversity and the business lines that we have, whether it be retail, culinary, attractions, visitor-service people who actually work with customers and visitors."

"Even on the buses we have people who tell the story of Niagara Parks and become ambassadors to Niagara."

NPC is one of the region's largest employers with more than 1,800 full-time and seasonal employees.

Saturday's job fair took place at the Niagara College campus on Dunn Street in Niagara Falls.

The job fair allows NPC to showcase the seasonal job opportunities that exist within the commission each year, while providing people with an opportunity to connect directly with various departmental managers.

Representatives from NPC's human resources department were also on hand to help answer questions.

More than 350 positions are available this year in culinary, retail, attractions, parks, golf, heritage and transportation.

NPC is also welcoming all those who qualify to consider a student co-op or an apprenticeship job placement.

New for this year, applicants were encouraged to create an online profile and submit their applications prior to the job fair.

St. Catharines teenager Marijke Roest, who is studying criminology at Carleton University, said she eventually wants a policing job, but was curious about the various opportunities at NPC.

The 18-year-old had her eyes on the heritage and administrative departments.



Niagara teenager Marijke Roest, left, speaks with Rebecca Pascoe, manager-curator of the Niagara Parks Commission's McFarland House, during an NPC job fair at the Niagara College campus on Dunn Street in Niagara Falls on Saturday.

"I'm really interested in the history of Niagara. I'm just looking to get experience for the future."

Stevensville resident Liam Burgess said he was open to different possibilities, but was particularly interested in golf and maintenance.

The 17-year-old said he applied online for positions in

both fields and was hoping to speak to department officials on Saturday.

Aurelio Rosano, who brought his 17-year-old son Francesco to the job fair, said it's a good opportunity for youth in the community to get some experience and summer work.

"I think it's great because

not a lot of people know how to get around and find these opportunities. Everything is done online, pretty much ... so it's kind of easier."

Dave Morris, director of human resources for the NPC, said some of the seasonal jobs may have full-time equivalents around the park.

"We have 300 full-time

staff, so it's a small contingent of full time. We have about 1,350 seasonal employees, so the vast majority of our business is seasonal, with the high operating season."

He said the NPC hired about 350 new employees last year.

"A lot of the folks who come seasonally, they return year after year, even our students."

Lohuis said one of the good things about the job fair is that "our line managers are here, so they're able to describe to the students and potential hires what the job entails, what we'd like to see accomplished in each of the business-line areas."

"This is something that provides an opportunity for us to use their skills and enthusiasm. Often we find, for instance, that students of course have advanced computer skills (and) some of the academic programs that they have apply directly to the job, so it's a nice infusion of creativity and talent that we like."

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# Community searches for missing Falls man

**RAY SPITERI**  
Postmedia Network

The Niagara community came together in a big way on Sunday afternoon to help search for missing Niagara Falls man Ben Trommels.

The 24-year-old was last seen on Feb. 11 at about 6 p.m.

His mother, Monique Smith, recently took to social media and contacted Postmedia Network on Friday to let the public know she was organizing some ground searches around Fireman's Park.

People who wanted to volunteer their time were asked to be at the park by 1 p.m. At that time,

the parking lot was jam-packed with people, including family, friends, community organizations and complete strangers.

Some were on ATVs, ready to search along nearby hydro lands.

"I can't believe it. Everyone is coming," said Smith.

"I have a lot of teachers here, which is beautiful, from all the schools I worked."

She said one of her friends is part of an ATV club, and she organized for several ATVs and riders to participate in the search.

"My son wasn't mentally well, and he always said that if he

took his life I wouldn't find him," said Smith.

"I'm just telling (everyone) to scatter anywhere around Fireman's Park because he lived just on (nearby) Casey Street, so if he went for a walk and wanted to end his life he's going to be close by."

Smith said her son suffers from schizophrenia.

"It's been almost three years and no medication has been working for him."

She described her son as a "strong, gorgeous boy."

"Anyone that knows him knows he's the most polite of anybody. (He has) lots of



RAY SPITERI/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

The parking lot at Fireman's Park in Niagara Falls was jam-packed with vehicles as people turned out on Sunday to search for 24-year-old Ben Trommels of Niagara Falls.

friends."

Friend Claudette Levesque, who taught at the same school as Monique, said Trommels is a "lovable, handsome young man."

"Very polite and friendly, but troubled," said Levesque.

Smith said she is hoping for "some closure."

She said police told her they don't suspect any foul play, and that if he is to be found, "not to touch him."

Smith was handing out her phone number in the parking lot, in case search participants found Trommels.

"Ben's never done anything like this before, that's why we're all really worried," said Kenny Blaney, who has been friends with Trommels for about six years.

"He's a good guy. He's quiet ... he's always hanging out at his house."

Blaney said he was impressed by the turnout on Sunday.

"There's a lot of people here. Ben was a really well-liked man. We're all just here and we're going to try our best to find Ben and hopefully bring him

home."

The Salvation Army set up shop in the parking lot at Fireman's Park and was giving out food and refreshments.

"We wanted to support the first responders, and the people that are out to search," said Salvation Army Niagara Lieut. Jason Dockery.

"I think we have a wonderful community. Everybody is always eager to help and to serve."

Niagara Regional Police continue to work with the family to try and locate Trommels. Police ask anyone with information to call them at 905-688-4111 ext. 2200.

Trommels is described as about 5-foot-8, about 170 pounds, with a dark olive complexion, hazel eyes and a shaved head. He has a scar over his left eyebrow. He was last seen wearing blue jeans, a black bomber-style jacket with a fur-trimmed hood, a blue zip hoody and running shoes.

ray.spiteri@postmedia.ca  
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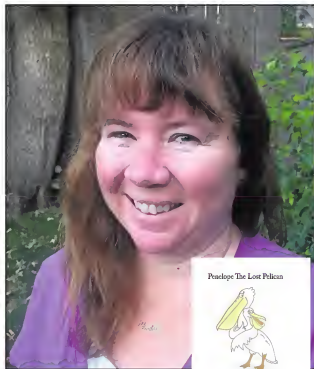
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FRANKI IKEMAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Port Colborne native Penny Beever has published her first book, *Penelope the Lost Pelican*.

# Port Colborne woman pens children's book

FRANKI IKEMAN  
Postmedia Network

A Hamilton preschool teacher and Port Colborne native has published her first children's book.

Penny Beever said the book, *Penelope The Lost Pelican*, is her first book but likely not the last and that she has other ideas.

"I basically teach two- and three-year-olds and they give me inspiration," Beever said.

The book is set in Clearwater, Florida and tells the story of *Penelope*, a lost pelican searching for her parents with the help of a dolphin friend.

Beever said the book also has educational elements and can serve as a talk-

ing point for parents and their young children.

"Parents can get into discussions with their children and what to do if they ever lost their parents."

Beever said writing the book came quickly and easily — written in just a few hours on her iPhone.

"It took me four hours to write it. I was on my way home from my cottage and I just felt so relaxed and I just started thinking," she said.

The book was published by Alabama publisher Sleepytown Press, and illustrated by the publisher — Randy Young.

The book is currently available for order from Amazon and through Sleepytown Press. Beever said she hopes to see it hit bookshelves soon, and said it would also be released as an e-book through Amazon.

## CALLING ALL JERRY LEE LEWIS FANS !

### LAS VEGAS JERRY LEE LEWIS TRIBUTE COMES TO PORT COLBORNE

The electrifying Joe Passion stars in "Jerry Lee Lewis" when it comes to the Roselawn Theatre



Goodness gracious, Great Balls of Fire! Don't miss international touring sensation Joe Passion when he stars as Jerry Lee Lewis in "Great Balls of Fire" coming to the Roselawn Theatre in Port Colborne on Sunday March 20th for an unforgettable matinee performance at 3pm.

The electrifying Passion has perfected the role over 20 years and truly captures the showmanship, boogie-woogie piano style and excitement of Jerry Lee Lewis in concert. He has headlined on world class stages across the US and Canada, including Las Vegas, Branson, Atlantic City and most recently, sold-out tours across Europe and Australia.

Sharing the stage with Jerry Lee Lewis will be special guests Jeff Giles as Buddy Holly and Bill Culp as the Big Bopper.

This unique combination of Joe Passion, Jeff Giles and Bill Culp promises to be the most dynamic performance Port Colborne audiences have ever seen!

Songs highlights include "Great Balls of Fire", "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On", "Peggy Sue", "That'll Be The Day", "Chantilly Lace" and many more audience favourites from the 1950s.

Tickets to see this incredible show at the Roselawn Theatre on Sunday March 20th at 3pm are on sale now, value priced at \$30 all inclusive and can be purchased at the ticket box office located at 296 Fielden Avenue, Port Colborne or via telephone at 905-834-7572. Get your tickets early for the best seats to this electrifying show!

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# LOCAL NEWS

## INDIGENOUS, ABORIGINAL FAMILY CONSULTATIONS

**Mental Health Service Providers** in Niagara invite families who have accessed mental health services for children and youth to participate in a 2-hour group discussion about their experiences.

The experience of families is key in developing community mental health plans to meet the needs of those receiving services.

The providers of children's mental health services in Niagara want to:

- Strive to understand the challenges you face in receiving child and youth mental health services
- Understand and improve the current pathways families, children and youth follow to access child and youth mental health services
- Hear how to continue to engage and partner with families to best inform planning services
- Hear how to improve the experience of children, youth, and families receiving child and youth mental health services and supports

Your participation in the focus group can make a difference.  
Please call to register.

**Aboriginal Parents & Caregivers  
can attend either of two Regional Consultations  
being held Wednesday March 2, 2016  
and Thursday March 3, 2016**

**Wednesday March 2, THOROLD – S.O.A.D.I.**  
(Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative)  
3250 Schmon Pkwy, Unit 1B, Thorold, L2V 4Y6  
**1:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

**Thursday March 3, FORT ERIE – Niagara Chapter-Native Women INC**  
1088 Garrison Rd., Fort Erie, L2A 1N9  
**10:00 am – 12:00 noon**

*Refreshments, honorariums, and financial support for transportation costs will be offered.*

To Register for a session,  
or if you have any questions,  
(including regarding child care)  
please contact Angela at:  
**905-684-3407, ext. 7231**  
**Angela@contactniagara.org**

## Sport for the mind at robotics competition

**KAREN WALTER**  
Postmedia Network

Jeffrey Maxwell knows there's a generation of kids who think a computer is a "glorified TV".

It's for YouTube, video games and music. It's for cat videos.

But Maxwell, a technology teacher at Holy Cross Secondary School, said it's so much more than that for the kids involved with robotics — a group that's growing in number.

"It's a tool. They get knowledge and information," said Maxwell, organizer of the Ontario VEX IQ Provincial Championship staged in St. Catharines Saturday.

"We're bringing it back to where kids can see that and experience it."

Students aged eight to 14 from 29 teams gathered from as far as Seattle, Wash. for the competition at Holy Cross after making the finals in their regions.

Eleven of the teams were from five Niagara schools — St. Ann in Fenwick, Loretto in Niagara Falls and Canadian Martyrs, St. Alfred and Assumption in St. Catharines.

Maxwell said robotics is an engaging way to draw kids' attention to science and engineering.

These students are the future problem-solvers and innovators, he said.

"It's more than building a robot."  
The first provincial championship for elementary aged students was aimed by Maxwell last year with the aim of getting children involved in science at a younger age.

Already the number of teams in the province has doubled since last year, he said. The hope is that more elementary schools will become aware of the program and join in.

He said Niagara Catholic District School Board is running a pilot in robotics in 12 elementary schools, where kids are learning in the classroom.

"St. Catharines has become known for robotics competition," said VEX Robotics global competition manager Karlth Kanagasabapathy, at the challenge Saturday.

School boards here have been leaders and the rest of the province are following.

It's why the elementary championship Saturday and the upcoming high school championship at Governor Simcoe are being held in St. Catharines instead of Toronto, he said.

The VEX IQ teams had to design and build remote-control robots from kits at their schools using their creativity and teamwork. Their robots had to be able

### WORLD QUALIFIERS

**Tournament champions:** Brampton Robotics Education Team 1140A and 1140X

**Elementary excellence:** Brampton Robotics Education

**Middle school excellence:** E-bots from Oakville

### JUDGE'S AWARDS FOR SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

■ St. Alfred Catholic Elementary School in St. Catharines

■ Anna McCrea Public School in Sault Ste. Marie

**Full list at:** [www.robotevents.com/robot-competitions/vex-iq-challenge](http://www.robotevents.com/robot-competitions/vex-iq-challenge)

to lift balls and drop them into a bucket and move a ramp.

The competition was judged by the Niagara Electrical Association, which also provided prizes to teams that won the judges awards to further develop their programs.

For Patrick Nash, a Grade 7 student from Assumption Catholic School in St. Catharines, the experience from start to competition was fun. He heard about it in Grade 6 and knew he wanted to join the team.

"I like science and I've always been building with Lego robots," he said.

The students from Assumption said they watched a lot of videos of robots to learn what works and what doesn't.

"We take inspiration from other robots doing well and then we try to build it," said Sebastian Vera, a Grade 8 student.

Kanagasabapathy said once kids go through the process of building a robot, they look at other tasks differently. They go to math class and see it's problem-solving.

And they're doing it while having fun playing a "sport for the mind."

Kids love video games, he said, and with robotics they're actually building their own games.

"They're setting the bar higher and higher," he said, adding that as adults we're proud if we can put our kids future together properly.

"They're building robots."

[kwalter@postmedia.com](mailto:kwalter@postmedia.com)

# LOCAL NEWS

## IN BRIEF

### A capella group Cadence performing at Centennial

Four voices will harmonize on March 4 to create a one-of-a-kind experience. The a cappella group Cadence will use their voices to perform classics from such artists as Joni Mitchell and Louis Prima.



Carl Berger, Ross Lynde, Lucas Marchand and Kurt Sampson of Cadence will perform at Welland Centennial Secondary School on March 4 as part of Welland-Port Colborne Concert Association's concert series.

The group creates the sound of a full band by using their voices. "We just thought they were fabulous," said Cheryl Maurice, association publicity chair for Welland-Port Colborne Concert Association, which is presenting Cadence as part of its concert series.

The 7:30 p.m. Friday show is at Welland Centennial Secondary School. The 2016-17 concert series lineup will be announced at the show. Members will be able to renew membership. Renewal will continue until April 8.

Maurice said people looking to become new members will be placed on a waiting list and then offered a membership.

To purchase tickets call Hilda Belcastro at 905-788-3648.

For more information visit Welland-Port Colborne Concert Association on Facebook.

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# Anglers become heroes

**RAY SPITERI**  
Postmedia Network

Kevin Brochu and his father Rick went from being fishermen to heroes this weekend when they rescued a man whose boat capsized in the frigid Niagara River.

The Welland residents were

fishing in a boat near Nicholls Marine in Fort Erie at about 3:30 p.m., Saturday when someone on shore started yelling at them that a person was further down the river "just floating".

The men pulled up anchor and headed towards the other end of the river in search of the person in distress.

"We saw the bow part of a boat up above the water, but the rest of the boat was all submerged," said Kevin. "He was about 100 feet away from the boat. He had a little life-jacket on and he was barely holding on."

He was moaning and just barely conscious. He was definitely hypothermic. The water

was 32 degrees. It was freezing. He couldn't move. We had to physically lift him in (the boat)."

He said they then transferred the patient to firefighters who had their own boat in the river.

Rick said the situation was "kind of scary," but he and his son remained focused on the task at hand.

Kevin said they heard there was a second person from the capsized boat and "apparently that person made it to shore."

"When a boat breaks down, you just stop fishing and help," he said. "Guys on boats just kind of help each other out. You just go."

According to Fort Erie Fire Department's Twiliter account, firefighters were dispatched to the Niagara River, near Central Avenue and Bowen Road for a water rescue at 3:24 p.m.

The fire department received a report of a boat that capsized in the river with two patients in the water.

The fire department said Niagara Regional Police and Niagara Emergency Medical Services also attended.

The fire department dispatched two rescue boats.

When both patients were brought out of the water, they were treated by paramedics.

The two boats conducted a tandem tow to bring the capsized boat to shore.

Fort Erie fire Chief Larry Coplen said the two men were from Port Colborne and "it sounds like were drift fishing" in

the river.

"You put your anchor out and slowly let the water push you downstream, but apparently the anchor got caught on something and flipped the boat over," he said.

Coplen said fortunately for the two men, the "stars aligned for them" because someone just happened to notice the situation from the shore, the two Welland residents were equipped to respond, and volunteer firefighters happened to be having a family day at the nearby Central Avenue station when the call came in.

They were able to get there within a minute, when normally it may have taken four or five minutes to assemble and get the equipment," said Coplen.

In a news release issued Sunday morning, Niagara Regional Police said the man unable to swim to shore was in danger of succumbing to the frigid water.

Thanks to the quick actions of the witnesses involved, two other fishermen were located close by on another boat, who were in turn able to find the male in distress and pull him aboard.

They were transported to hospital, suffering from hypothermia, but are expected to make a full recovery.

ray.spiteri@postmedia.ca  
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**IN BRIEF**

**Police pursuit ends in arrest in Welland**

A St. Catharines man was arrested after a police pursuit that began with a car theft from a driveway.

Niagara Regional Police said they were called on Friday after a St. Catharines resident reported a man stealing his vehicle.

The resident tried to stop the thief and an altercation broke out. The victim received minor injuries.

Police went to the area, immediately spotted the vehicle and tried to stop it. The driver wouldn't pull over and police followed him.

They halted the chase after a brief pursuit because of public safety concerns. The vehicle was

eventually located in Welland where officers pulled it over. Police said the driver got out and ran away but was arrested by a member of the canine unit after a short foot chase.

Edward Hickens, 42, was charged with robbery, flight from police, failing to remain, dangerous driving, driving while disqualified, failing to comply with a probation order and driving while under suspension.

**Kitchen fire spreads to St. Catharines attic**

St. Catharines firefighters had to cut through a roof at a Meadowdale Drive home Saturday morning.

The fire department was called to the house north of the QEW just after 4 a.m. for an accidental kitchen fire in the single-storey home that spread to the attic.

The sole occupant met firefighters outside and was taken to hospital as a precaution for slight smoke inhalation.

Firefighters estimated damage at about \$60,000 due to the holes that had to be cut into the roof to access the fire.

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# Second chance for working dogs

FRANKI IEMAN  
Postmedia Network

If you were to meet Diesel outside of his kennel at Welland and District Humane Society, you'd be looking at a friendly, smart and sociable dog.

But that nice demeanour, typical of a German shepherd, just when Diesel is in his kennel, and replaced with growling, barking and teeth-baring.

It's what humane society animal care manager Tammy Gaboury calls barrier or kennel aggression — and it's behaviour that prevents the shelter from placing Diesel up for adoption.

In some places, that could mean the end of the road for dogs like Diesel. Gaboury is hoping, however, that won't be the case.

The shelter has been sending dogs to Hamburg, N.Y., dog trainer Iey Adams, who runs training programs to place dogs into canine units across the United States — for about two years.

Gaboury said Adams approached the shelter, and has since taken several dogs into the program.

"He trains the dogs, they go through his program for either drug detection, he also does search and rescue and he does take-downs with the dogs... so different facets for what works best for those dogs," Gaboury said.

She said the program is not breed-specific, and that the shelter has successfully sent a German shepherd, a chocolate Lab and an Amer-

ican Staffordshire (pit bull), into the program.

All of the dogs were dogs that were either unable to be adopted because of behaviour, or in the case of the pit bull, unable to be released because of breed-specific legislation.

"It allows us to place the dogs," said humane society executive director John Greer. "It comes to a point in

time with the shelter where there may have been only one option before and this gives us that extra option for that dog to go out and live out its life and do what it needs to do."

Both Greer and Gaboury are hoping that Diesel will pass the test to be admitted into the program and get his second chance as a working dog.

"Sometimes dogs that are

bored that aren't getting the stimulation that they need become bad dogs, and it's no fault of their own," Gaboury said.

Added Greer: "That's why this program is so good. These guys we've kind of tried everything we can and they're kind of on their last chance."

franki.ianman@sunmedia.ca



FRANKI IEMAN/  
POSTMEDIA NETWORK  
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Humane Society's  
Tammy Gaboury  
visits Diesel at the  
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INPORT NEWS

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# LOCAL NEWS

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## Leads run dry in candy tampering cases

MARYANNE FIRTH  
Postmedia Network

Police say leads have dried up in their investigation of several incidents of candy tampering last Halloween.

When Niagara Regional Police last released information about the tainted mini-chocolate bars found in different areas of the region, it was just days after the trick-or-treating holiday and there had been five reported cases.

But within a week of Oct. 31, the list of reported incidents grew to 12, Const. Phil Gavin said.

The five initial reports included chocolate bars of different brands found with various types of metal blades and a finishing nail inside. The candy was collected by children going door to door in different Niagara communities. There were no reported injuries.

The reported incidents included two in Thorold, two in Niagara Falls, three in Fort Erie, one in Niagara-on-the-Lake, two in St. Catharines and two in Welland.

After initial reports were publicized by the NRP and the media, police determined there may have been some "copy-cat" incidents, both in the placement of

objects and the reporting," Gavin said.

"The investigators developed information that led them to question the validity of some of the incidents," he said. "We are not prepared to give details on the investigative steps."

In the months since Halloween, "the investigations have gone cold," Gavin said.

All leads were exhausted, he said, and no new information has become available.

"There were inconsistencies with different parts of the investigations that made it difficult to identify a suspect."

Though trick-or-treating is likely not on the minds of parents just yet, Gavin said that families keep in mind "historical safety steps" on Halloween, including examining all candy before it is eaten and looking for package tampering.

Children and their guardians going door to door should also be aware of the route they take, he said. If more candy tampering incidents arise, it will provide police better information to track where the products might be coming from.

maryanne.firth@postmedia.ca  
Twitter: @firthStandard

## Man arrested in Revenue Canada scam

BILL SAWCHUK  
Postmedia Network

A St. Catharines man is with fraud and laundering the proceeds of crime.

In January, Niagara Regional Police started an investigation into a man who had recruited individuals from his workplace in St. Catharines to take part in a Revenue Canada scam by using their bank accounts to hold on to the money of victims.

Sgt. Paul Spiridi, head of the NRP's central fraud unit, said he can't talk about the specifics of a case before the courts, but warned scams of this ilk are popular.

The scams occur when victims are told they owe Revenue Canada back taxes and are required to pay a large sum of money immediately to avoid being arrested.

"There are two parts," he said. "They get money from you and get you to confirm your personal information and have it to sell as well. Now, you not only are the victim of the fraud you were targeted for, but you are the potential victim of an identity fraud as well."

The CRA never sends an e-mail with a link that asks you to divulge personal or financial information over the phone, an alert from the agency said. It never

requests payments by prepaid credit cards.

"It's not one group that is doing it," Spiridi said. "There are multiple groups. They are very organized. The same guys do other scams as well. They find one that works and ride it. They find the right button to push."

Spiridi said the groups can be very elaborate in how they organize themselves and how they move the money around. Sometimes people working for the group may not know who is running the whole thing.

"We put the warnings out, and on the surface, you say how could somebody fall for this, but when you get people that are new to the country and are from places where government officials are not so reputable and will take bribes, it happens. Especially when you are threatened with arrest or that you will lose your citizenship."

Adnan Hassan Al-Defery-Aajab, 41, is charged with fraud under \$5,000 and laundering the proceeds of crime. The charge against the accused has not yet been proven in court.

bsawchuk@postmedia.com

# LOCAL NEWS



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Some of the wax figures from the Criminal Hall of Fame that Harry Riley has listed for sale.

## For sale: the worst of the worst in wax

ANDREA TINGEY

Special to Postmedia Network

Crime doesn't pay. Unless, of course, you're selling the criminal.

Harry Riley, 80, is selling wax figures from the former Criminal Hall of Fame in Niagara Falls online. Ed Gein, John Wayne Gacy and Adolf Hitler are among the 28 figures available on local Kijiji and Craigslist pages.

"Everyone thinks it's weird," said Riley. "They're shocked when they see them, especially the Hitler guy." The replicas range from political figures like Abraham Lincoln, used in the John Wilkes Booth exhibit, to mobsters and serial killers.

Riley was approached by Don Lombardi, former owner of the wax museum, but is still having trouble selling the figures. He dropped the price from \$2,000 to \$1,295 in 2014.

He's also selling a barber chair and a 1941 Ford deluxe police car, priced at \$12,000, both from the museum.

Riley's had calls from as far as Los Angeles, but is still having trouble selling the figures. He dropped the price from \$2,000 to \$1,295 in 2014.

"They're some collectors that, believe it or not, buy this kind of stuff," he said. "I don't know if you'd like to have Hitler in your bedroom, but some people

collect weird things." Riley has already sold Al Capone. The mobster went to Mario Gomes, a Capone aficionado in Montreal who has been collecting merchandise for nearly 20 years.

"I've been looking for a while," said Gomes in an e-mail, adding he considered commissioning an artist to create a Capone for him.

"I was happy with the one at the Criminal Hall of Fame because it was a great start-off point and I knew I could make it more correct," Gomes spent \$1,000 making the wax figure more accurate, including adding coloured contacts, period clothes and an authentic Cuban cigar.

Peter Collins, operations manager at the Movieland Wax Museum, said most wax museums keep their figures in storage. Selling wax figures is rare, and usually only happens if a museum has closed its doors for good.

"I'd doubt they'd be of any interest to me," he said of the figures. "We're looking for things that are more relevant." Riley, however, is looking forward to getting rid of the figures. He hopes someone will decide to start their own museum.

"You have to get the right person that can use it in a bar, or in a museum or in someplace," he said. "It's not something I would have around the house."

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# Niagara history in full form

**Q:** With the unveiling of the Harriet Tubman statue, I started wondering how many "prominent people" statues there are in St. Catharines. There's Watson and Merritt, and last year Brock was added. Are there others? I can't remember if the 'oarsman' in Port Dalhousie is of a specific person.

**A:** Statues of prominent figures can be found across the region, if you know where to find them.

While there isn't a huge collection of statues in St. Catharines alone, there are at least a dozen full-body statues across Niagara — including one memorialized horse.

It's time for the first-ever Search Engine bronze prominent people tour.

The most recent addition, as mentioned, is that of famed Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman at the new public school that bears her name in St. Catharines.

The life-size bronze statue was unveiled Feb. 9 at the Henry Street school, which is located close to where Tubman actually lived on North Street.

Other St. Catharines statues include Private Alexander

Watson, a soldier who died fighting against Louis Riel, that stands in front of city hall. The statue dates back to the 1880s.

William Hamilton Merritt, the city's most celebrated citizen whose brainchild was the Welland Canal, is celebrated in a bronze statue from 1928 that's located on St. Paul Street West by the Buggaye Bridge.

Also in St. Catharines is War of 1812 hero Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, who arrived at Brock University's campus in March 2015 after being commissioned in 2013 through a gift by the late David S. Howes.

Brock also stands atop his 56-metre-high monument at Queenston Heights in Niagara-on-the-Lake, which dates back to 1853. The original monument was bombed by a terrorist in 1840.

The general's horse Alfred is also commemorated in Queenston with a 1976 bronze statue displayed in a glass case off Clarence Street. The Niagara Parks Commission says on its website that Brock rode the horse on Oct. 13, 1812 from Fort George to Queenston and tethered it so he could lead a charge on foot. Brock was killed, and Colonel John Macdonell then mounted Alfred to lead another charge. Man and horse were killed that day.

In the heart of Old Town Niagara-on-the-Lake, playwright George Bernard Shaw stands on Queen Street in a fountain in the courtyard of Shaw Cafe and Wine Bar. He has a good view of the intermission crowds at Shaw Festival's Royal George Theatre across the street.

Niagara-on-the-Lake is also home to a statue of John Graves Simcoe, the first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, in the park named after him.

In Welland, furniture store founder Abian Leon's statue can be found in Chippawa Park. He is seated on a bronze couch in a living room that includes chairs and a coffee table near a rose garden. Leon opened his first

## FACT FINDER!

The Harriet Tubman statue at the public school in St. Catharines was crafted by former Niagara artist Frank Rekrut and his wife Laura Thompson. Rekrut also sculpted the statue of Tubman unveiled in 2010 at the BME Church garden on Geneva Street.

store in Welland more than a century ago and the interactive life-sized work was unveiled in 2009 to cheer work of a crowd of about 200 of his descendants.

Inventor Nikola Tesla overlooks the Horseshoe Falls in Queen Victoria Park in Niagara Falls, which he saw in a photo as a young boy, telling his uncle he wanted to harness the power of the water. Tesla is standing on an AC motor, one of the 700 inventions he patented. The 2,000-pound statue was donated by members of St. George's Serbian Orthodox church in 2006 to recognize the 150th anniversary of the birth of Tesla, who is a national hero in his homeland.

Also found in Queen Victoria Park is a statue of George VI, the father of Queen Elizabeth II, whose first royal visit to Canada in 1939 was the visit by a reigning British monarch and included a stop in Niagara Falls.

Up the road near Clifton Hill is a statue of French d'ardeville Charles Blondin, who's walking above Victoria Avenue on a wire. The Great Blondin is credited as the first person to walk across the Niagara gorge on a tight-rope, in 1859.

Is anyone missing on our tour? Please e-mail, tweet or Facebook with a statue that's been overlooked.

And about that oarsman statue at the gateway to Port Dalhousie's Rennie Park? Titled The Spirit of St. Catharines, it was unveiled for the World Rowing Championships the city hosted in 1999, by Ridgeville sculptor Perry Wakelind.

"It's not meant to be a particular person," the artist said at the unveiling in August that year. "It's symbolic of rowing in St. Catharines and rowing (universally)."

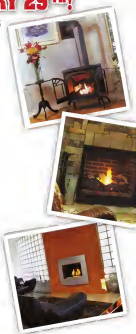
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## Man hit with Taser during arrest

Postmedia Network

A man was hit with a Taser and two suspects were arrested, as Niagara Regional Police responded to complaints about a noisy party in the early hours of Friday morning.

After repeated complaints about loud music, police say officers initially responded to the apartment complex near the intersection of Southworth and Navy Streets at about 9:10 p.m. last Thursday.

Police say the loud music could be heard from the roadway as officers arrived at the building, and the resident of the apartment was given a ticket for violating the city's noise bylaws.

Police were called back to the building at 3:30 a.m. Friday, again due to excessive noise complaints. But when the officers arrived for the second time, police say

the apartment resident and his 15 party guests became aggressive.

The two responding officers tried to arrest two men at the party, but when the suspects didn't co-operate additional officers responded to help. A conducted energy weapon, commonly called a Taser, was used by police while arresting one of the suspects.

Police spokesman Const. Phil Gavin said no one was injured in the disturbance, or as a result of using the Taser. And police are not identifying the man who was hit with the weapon, he added.

Brandon Longpre, 21, has been charged with mischief, interfere with the lawful use or enjoyment of property, and possession of cocaine.

And Khadeem Antoine, 22, has been charged with mischief interfere with the lawful use or enjoyment of property, and resisting arrest.

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## IKEA opening St. Catharines store today

Postmedia Network

IKEA Canada's new pick-up and order-point store in St. Catharines will officially open today.

Spokeswoman Stephanie Kerr said roughly 30 workers have been hired for the Fairview Mall location on Geneva Street, in the former Future Shop site.

The store will allow customers who have shopped online or at another IKEA store to pick up their purchases locally. It will feature a scaled-down showroom, stations to support customers with their planning process and tablets to help shoppers buy online.

It is expected to mean cheaper delivery time and costs for customers.

IKEA has previously said orders would be delivered to the pick-up store for \$20.

It currently has 12 stores across Canada

as well as three pick-up and order points in Quebec City, London and Whitby.

That new format is part of a global test pilot for markets where there are currently no stores.

The opening and ribbon cutting starts at 10 a.m. and will feature speeches from IKEA president Stefan Sjostrand, the company's pick-up and order point manager Cathy Morris and St. Catharines Mayor Walter Szendzik.

"Like many residents, I'm excited about IKEA opening in St. Catharines. The location is ideal," said Szendzik in an e-mail.

"It's accessible by public transit and next to the QEW corridor and IKEA is sure to draw in new visitors and shoppers to St. Catharines. As I've said before, this is an important symbol of investment coming into St. Catharines."



JULIE JOSSMA/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

The sign on the new IKEA Pick-Up and Order Point store at the Fairview Mall in St. Catharines is now up.

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# Woman leads fight to save pitbulls

**KAREN WALTER**  
Postmedia Network

The plight of 21 Ontario pitbulls heading to death row has prompted a St. Catharines woman to launch a petition and fundraising campaign to save their lives.

More than 54,000 people have signed the online Care2 petition started by Kirstyn Smith urging authorities not to euthanize pitbulls seized from an alleged Chatham-Kent dogfighting ring.

"After all they've been through, I'm pretty sure they deserve a second chance," Smith said last Thursday.

After reading about the seizure, the 24-year-old took it upon herself to start the petition and reach out to animal organizations with out-of-province contacts to see if

any will take the dogs, which are illegal in Ontario.

She also started a GoFundMe online account Thursday to help pay for any costs associated with transporting the animals, should the plan take off.

"Pitbulls have already received such a negative review and it's mainly because of people like the ones involved in this case," Smith said. "It's not the dogs' fault. It's the owners."

Judging by the numbers who have signed her petition, which she was hoping would reach 5,000 to 10,000 people, many agree with her.

"I don't want the SPCA to stay quiet and just request these dogs get sent to death row," Smith said. "If we band together and there's enough of us, then they kind of

have to answer."

The Ontario SPCA and Chatham-Kent Police busted up a suspected dog-fighting operation Oct. 9 in Tilbury East Township.

In a media release at the time, the Ontario SPCA said 31 pitbull-type dogs were seized at the Morris Line property along with evidence consistent with the training of dogs to fight.

Police also found 15 shotguns and rifles and marijuana in the search.

Three Morris Line residents are facing criminal charges that include cruelty to animals and unlawfully owning a pitbull-type dog.

The Ontario SPCA has since made a court application to euthanize 21 of the dogs, the *Chatham Daily News* has reported.

Owning a pitbull in Ontario is illegal under the Dog Owner's Liability Act.

But the Ontario SPCA told the *Daily News* the decision to make the application had to do with the dogs' behaviour.

Insp. Brad Dewar told the paper, which like *The Tribune* is operated by Postmedia, the application was not made because of the legislation banning ownership, but because of evidence by "industry-leading experts in relation to their involvement in animals used for fighting."

He said the goal of the society is to see animals rehabilitated and placed in homes, and the decision was not taken lightly.

The application will be heard in court March 10.

Smith, a long-time animal advocate, said the dogs should be given another chance.

"Obviously, you wouldn't want to put anybody in a dangerous situation because of what these dogs were trained for," she said, but added they might get better in a more positive environment than where they were or where they currently are in a shelter.

She hopes animal agencies will assist in transporting the dogs out of province.

It's the kind of service Lincoln County Humane Society in St. Catharines has been doing since the ban on pitbulls

came into being in 2005.

Executive director Kevin Strooband said the humane society has shipped 40 to 50 pitbulls out of province since the Ontario ban.

As recently as last week, the society sent a pit bull that was seized by police in a Page Street drug raid in St. Catharines to New Brunswick.

Strooband said when a pitbull comes into the humane society's care, the agency likely can't release it in Ontario, even if the owner comes forward.

"They've sent dogs to Calgary, Edmonton, New York state, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick at a cost of \$400 to \$450 a dog rather than euthanize them."

The shelter hasn't been contacted about the Chatham-Kent pitbulls, but Strooband said it would be willing to share out-of-province contacts if requested.

Strooband said the challenge with pitbull fighting rings is the dogs might be too aggressive to adopt out.

"There has to be an element of public safety in what we do," he said.

Ontario instituted a two-phase ban on pitbulls a decade ago. Under the ban, all puppies born after Nov. 28, 2005, must be given to a research centre, shipped out of province or euthanized.

— with files from *The Chatham Daily News*

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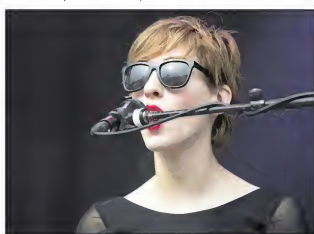
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Kirstyn Smith with her online petition to save several dogs.

BOB THYMECZYK/POSTMEDIA NETWORK



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Operators' Devoika. It's the new band from Wolf Parade's Dan Boeckner.

# Operators dial up new sounds

JOHN LAW  
Postmedia Network

Like many fans of beloved Montreal band Wolf Parade, multi-tasking artist Devoika wondered what it would be like to play with band leader Dan Boeckner.

Flash forward a few years and she's on stage with Boeckner in his new band, Operators. So what's going through her mind?

"I was just minding my own business trying to play my parts," says the free-spirited California keyboardist. "I was not looking at what anyone else was doing. I could care less! They could have both been on fire and I would not have known."

She's a bit more loose now that Operators has Boeckner's full attention. Though Wolf Parade will be touring later this year, he's taking Operators out for a test spin across Ontario this month, just last weekend hitting The Detour in St. Catharines. It was a warm-up for a hectic U.S. tour in March that'll see the band play 21 shows in 27 days.

The band's anticipated debut album, *Blue Wagon*, arrives April 1. Wolf Parade hasn't released an album in six years and has been on hiatus since 2011, and fans like Devoika can't wait to see them play again. In the meantime, fans are giving a warm reception to his new band. *Cold Light*, the first single, is vintage Boeckner with its electro-pop chorus and '80s vibe. In fact, it sounds plucked from the vaults of yet another Boeckner band, the defunct Handsome Furs.

"We don't have people coming to these shows just to yell at Dan to get back into Wolf Parade," says Devoika. "I think a lot of fans of Handsome Furs really like this

music. Operators, at least at its inception, was just a continuation of all the work Dan had been doing in Handsome Furs which is when he really got into electronics and really got into programming."

"What I've learned from being in the band and watching Dan work is that when it's your work you love, you do it all the time. For the time being, Dan has an inexhaustible well of inspiration and drive."

Being in a Boeckner band has other benefits — like allowing Devoika to wander around Montreal blissfully unaware of what's being said.

"I've been spending a lot of time there, and one of my favourite things is that I can't understand what people are saying," she says. "I can't eavesdrop on people's conversations. I'm not judging people! You know, like 'Why are you doing that with your life? That's wrong!' I get stressed out about it ... you're making bad choices!"

What else does she dig about Canada? "I love that people get old here, they allow themselves to get old. In California, that just does not happen. They're more spry and vigorous, 70-something-year-olds out-jogging me."

"I need to jog more."

Though she's plenty busy making her own music, Devoika is thrilled to be backing up Boeckner, however long it lasts.

"Operators is really Dan. Sam (Brown, drummer) and I support him, but that's sort of the mission statement. It's a nice theoretical proclamation, but Sam and I are just as invested."

"It is, for us, something we see happening as long as it makes sense for it to happen."



February 26<sup>th</sup> To March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016



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# IN BRIEF

## Niagara cop charged with firearm offence

A Niagara Regional Police officer was

arrested last Wednesday in connection with an incident inside the Niagara Falls police station.

Detectives from the 3 District (Welland) criminal investigation branch conducted an investigation into what had occurred at 4343 Morrison St.

As a result of the

investigation, Candice Wilson, an on-duty constable, was arrested, said a news release issued late Wednesday night.

She is charged with pointing a firearm contrary to Section 87 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

She has been released from custody with a future

court date.

Wilson has been a police officer for six years and is assigned to 2 District Niagara Falls uniform patrol.

Police said the alleged incident did not involve a member of the public.

In accordance with the Police Services Act

of Ontario, Wilson has been suspended with pay pending the outcome of the ongoing criminal investigation.

Police said further details of this matter will not be released at this time as the matter is before the courts and the investigation is ongoing.

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# LOCAL NEWS



MARYANNE FIRTIN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Ella Bella Bum owner Sam Campbell, in a file photo. The award-winning company has gone out of business.

## Ella Bella bummed over closure

MICHELLE ALLENBERG  
Postmedia Network

Ella Bella Bum, winner of three 2015 Ruby awards for local businesses in October, has closed.

The company won three awards, including owner Samantha Campbell receiving the venture Niagara award, and Ella Bella Bum getting the business of the year award.

The company, which sold cloth diapers and eco-friendly products, was started in Campbell's basement in January 2013.

It soon became a success and a year later moved from the basement to a local business centre at 76 Division St. in Welland. After moving into one office space the company expanded, taking over the entire first floor of the building.

Campbell said last week the store "did close down because we had grown too big too soon. The market couldn't support such a large manufacturing facility ... It's been quite emotional."

She said the decision to shut down wasn't easy. In hindsight, she said, there should have been layoffs to save the company, but she didn't want to put anyone out of a job.

Another factor was that the company's customer base was mostly from western Canada, so when the recession hit there Campbell lost clientele.

Welland Pelham Chamber of Commerce executive director Dolores Fabiano was surprised to hear of the closure. "I'm saddened to hear that, actually," she said. "They seemed to be doing really well. They had a nice product and a nice business model that was doing well, so I'm surprised."

Campbell said Ella Bella Bum has been rebranded and will sell some of the same products. She would not comment on the rebranding or name of the new company. Campbell said she is part of the rebranding, but wouldn't comment as to her level of involvement.

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# 'Real significance' to wine in grocery stores

RAY SPITERI  
Postmedia Network

The Niagara wine industry is applauding last Thursday's announcement from the provincial government that wine will be sold in up to 300 grocery stores

across Ontario.

Wine, beer and cider will be available for sale in 70 grocers this fall.

"This is of real significance to our industry," said Patrick Gedge, president of the Winery & Grower Alliance of Ontario, based in Vine-

land.

"There is potential for us to grow the industry as a result of that ... to grow the sale of Ontario wine, buy more Ontario grapes and increase our economic impact to the province."

Premier Kathleen Wynne

announced the expanded alcohol sales at a Toronto grocery store last Thursday morning.

Ed Clark's wine and spirits panel has called for existing wine retailers in grocery stores to be allowed to share check-out lanes.

"Finally people in Ontario will be able to buy their wine and groceries at the same place, at the same time at the same checkout," Wynne said in a statement.

Ontario began permitting beer sales in grocery stores in December.

Clark did not recommend stand-alone booze stores, and some grocers will be limited to Ontario-only VQA wine for the first three years. The new plan for alcohol sales still falls far short of what's available in some other provinces and the U.S.

"The government said, 'I don't want to blow up the LCBO, I don't want to blow up The Beer Store, what I want is for them to be better,'" said Clark.

Gedge said his group worked with Clark and his team for the last year and a half to "ensure the changes provide growth opportunities for all segments of the Ontario wine industry."

Gedge described Clark's recommendations as balanced.

"We look forward to enhancing consumer access and exposure to Ontario wines through grocers in the province."

Gedge said the alliance stressed to Clark the important economic driver and growth potential of the Ontario wine industry that extends across agriculture, production, distribution, and tourism.

"We consistently advocated for a progressive policy framework for the Ontario wine industry across three principles that would drive domestic industry growth, recognize investments already made, and ensure our ability to compete with the international wine market," he said.

Currently, wine is only sold at the LCBO and a select number of retailers, such as the Wine Rack.

Richard Linley, president of the Wine Council of Ontario, also based in Vine-

land, said the announcement is a "positive first step in leveling the playing field" for Ontario VQA wineries.

"The proposed approach will have a direct positive impact on the future of Ontario VQA wineries, leading to increased sales, growth and job creation in our industry," he said. "Future retail channels will also help complement our industry's longstanding and important partnership with the LCBO."

According to the province, the bidding and authorization process for wine will be similar to the beer in grocery stores initiative.

To ensure fair representation of grocers and an equitable geographic distribution, the allocation criteria for wine will be similar to beer, with authorizations reserved for independent grocers and allocated across regions.

In mid-December, Food Basics on Montrose Road was named by the provincial government as one of the first 50 grocery stores across Ontario to sell beer.

Food Basics in Niagara Falls was the only Niagara store listed in the first round of Ontario's commitment to make it more convenient for people to buy beer.

Ministry of Finance spokesman Scott Blodgett said grocers that currently sell beer can't automatically sell wine.

"Single-store grocery operators that were successful in the 2015 allocation would be able to bid for a new universal wine licence for their store to combine with their existing beer licence."

Blodgett said large grocers are able to transfer their existing beer authorizations to another of their stores within a region, "and so those grocers would participate in the competitive allocation process for the new universal wine and beer licences."

Mark Bernhardt, a spokesman for Metro Ontario Inc., which owns Food Basics, said they're pleased to hear of the wine announcement, "and we look forward to offering it in our stores."

"We don't have information on which stores will sell wine yet, but will make that information available as soon as we're able to," he said.



## PLAYOFF HOCKEY

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## SUNDAY, FEB. 28<sup>TH</sup> 7:30PM\*

\*Tentative Schedule Date - Subject to Change



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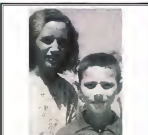
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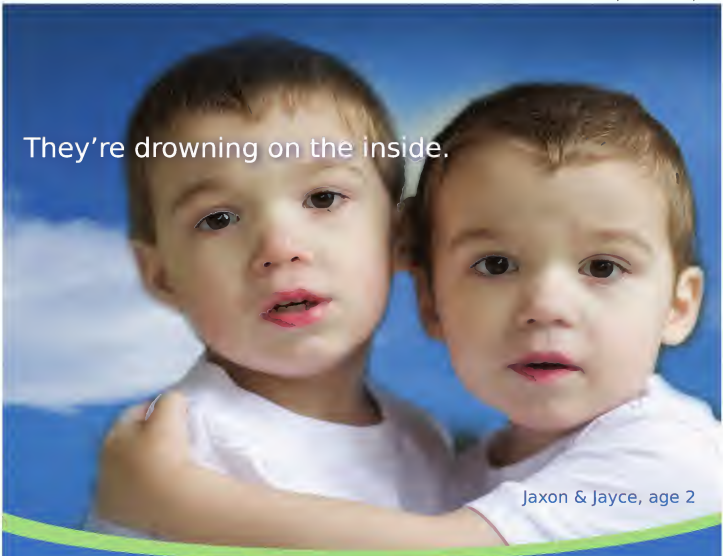
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